IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

1.   (currently amended) A method for enabling identification of network users having similar interests, and facilitating communication between them, the method comprising:

providing a server having a distance calculating module operating thereon;

using the distance module, calculating a virtual distance between a web page that a user is accessing through a first terminal and ~~other~~ web pages accessed by other users through one or more second terminals, wherein the web page that the user is accessing and each of the ~~other~~ web pages accessed by the other users comprise any web page on the Internet;

displaying for the user on a display a listing of other users determined to be within a predetermined ~~pre-determined~~ virtual distance from the web page that the user is accessing ~~has accessed~~; and

enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users from the displayed listing.

2.   (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the method further comprises receiving a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) address of the web page that the user is accessing ~~has accessed~~.

3.   (currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the virtual distance is calculated by the distance module using a distance mapping technique.

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4.   (previously presented) The method of claim 3, wherein the distance mapping technique comprises identifying users accessing web pages having words or phrases of cognitive similarity.

5.   (**currently amended**) The method of claim 3, wherein the distance mapping technique comprises comparing a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) address of the web page that the user is accessing ~~has accessed~~ to URI addresses of the ~~other~~ web pages being accessed by other users.

6.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein displaying for the user a listing of other users further comprises displaying the listing of other users in a graphical user interface (GUI).

7.   (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the GUI comprises a web browser.

8.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling the user to access profile data associated with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing.

9.   (original) The method of claim 8, wherein the profile data comprises one or more of contact information, demographic information, profession, hobbies, or interests.

10.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to
        communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing
        further comprises enabling the user to instant message one or more of the other users
        selected from the displayed listing.

11.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to
        communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing
        further comprises enabling the user to e-mail one or more of the other users selected from
        the displayed listing.

12.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to
        communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing
        further comprises enabling the user to initiate a voice over Internet protocol (VoIP)
        communication with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing.

13.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to
        communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing
        further comprises enabling the user to initiate a transaction with one or more of the other
        users selected from the displayed listing.

14.   (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the transaction comprises an exchange of
        currency.

15.   (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the transaction comprises an exchange of at
        least one of airline frequent flier miles, or affinity program points.

16. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling the user to execute a search query against a search engine.

17. (previously presented) The method of claim 16, wherein results of the search query comprise a listing of one or more web pages, and wherein each of the one or more web pages listed is displayed with an associated visual indicator displaying a number of users currently accessing that respective web page.

18. (**currently amended**) A system for enabling identification of network users having similar interests and facilitating communication between them, the system comprising:

a server having a distance calculating module operating thereon ~~means~~ for calculating a virtual distance between a web page that a user is accessing through a first terminal and ~~other~~ web pages accessed by other users through one or more second terminals, wherein the web page that ~~is~~ the user is accessing and each of the ~~other~~ web pages accessed by the other users comprise any web page on the Internet;

a display ~~means for~~ displaying for the user a listing of other users determined to be within a predetermined virtual distance from the ~~first~~ web page that the user is accessing ~~has accessed~~; and

a communications module operable on the server ~~means for~~ enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users from the displayed listing.

19. (**currently amended**) A method for enabling identification of network users having similar interests~~,~~ and facilitating communication between them, the method comprising:

providing a server having modules operable thereon;

    identifying a data object that a user is accessing through a first terminal using at least one of the modules;

    determining a listing of other users that are currently accessing or that have recently accessed the data object through one or more second terminals;

    filtering the listing of other users based on an affinity between data associated with the user and data associated with the other users;

    displaying the filtered listing of the other users on a display; and

    enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed filtered listing.

20.   (previously presented) The method of claim 19, wherein the affinity between the data associated with the user and data associated with the other users is determined using similarity of profile attributes.

21.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises identifying the web page that the user is accessing.

22.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises determining the presence of other users at or near the web page that the user is accessing.

23.   (previously presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for identifying the web page that the user is accessing.

24.   (previously presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for
        determining the presence of other users at or near the web page that the user is accessing.

25.   (**currently amended**) A method for enabling identification ~~of~~ within a network of a first
        user having ~~similar~~ interests similar to a ~~first~~ second user and facilitating communication
        between them, the method comprising:

        providing a server having a distance calculating module operating thereon;

        using the distance module, calculating a virtual distance between a first web page that a
                first user is accessing through a first terminal and a second web page accessed by
                a second user through a second terminal, wherein the first web page and the
                second web page comprise any web page on the Internet;

        wherein upon the second web page being determined to be within a predetermined
                virtual distance from the first web page, ~~enabling~~ the first user ~~to~~ may
                communicate with the second user through the first terminal.

26.   (previously presented) The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises tracking
        the virtual location of the user and each of the other users anywhere on the Internet.

27.   (previously presented) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for
        tracking the virtual location of the user and each of the other users anywhere on the
        Internet.

28.   (new) A method for enabling identification of network users having similar
        characteristics and facilitating communication between them, the method comprising:

        providing a server having a distance calculating module operating thereon;

        using the distance module, calculating a virtual distance between a web page that a user is
                accessing through a first terminal and web pages accessed by other users through
                one or more second terminals, wherein the web page that the user is accessing
                and each of the web pages accessed by the other users comprise any web page on
                the Internet; and

        displaying for the user on a display interface a list of other users compiled based on the
                virtual distance between the web page that the user is accessing and the web pages
                accessed by the other users.

29.   (new) The method according to claim 28, further comprising enabling the user to
        communicate via the first terminal with one or more of the other users from the displayed
        listing.

30.   (new) The method of claim 28, wherein the list of other users is ranked in order of
        nearest to furthest virtual distance from the web page that the user is accessing.

31.   (new) The method of claim 28, wherein the list of other users is compiled based on the
        virtual distance between the web page that the user is accessing and the web pages
        accessed by the other users being with a predetermined virtual distance.

32.   (**new**) A system for enabling identification of network users having similar

characteristics and facilitating communication between them, the system comprising:

a server having a distance calculating module operating thereon for calculating a virtual

distance between a web page that a user is accessing through a first terminal and

web pages accessed by other users through one or more second terminals, wherein

the web page that the user is accessing and each of the web pages comprise any

web page on the Internet;

a display displaying for the user a listing of other users determined to be within a

predetermined virtual distance from the web page that the user is accessing.

33.   (**new**) The system according to claim 32, wherein the user can communicate with one or

more of the other users from the displayed listing.

34.   (**new**) The system according to claim 32, further comprising a communication module

operating on the server for enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the

other users via the first terminal.

35.   (**new**) The method according to claim 1, wherein the virtual distance is calculated upon

the user accessing a web page through the first terminal.